



**Non scholae sed vitae discimus**

*'For Life, not school we learn'*

## **Attendance Policy**

**(Revised November 2017)**

Committee with oversight for this policy - Achievement	
Policy to be approved by the Achievement Committee	
Policy last reviewed by the Achievement Committee	<b>28/11/2017</b>
Policy last ratified and adopted by Achievement Committee	<b>28/11/2017</b>
Policy / Document due for review	<b>November 2018</b>

**Villiers High School recognises that:**

- There is a clear link between students' attainment and their level of attendance. In order for children to achieve their best they need to be in school regularly.
- Late arrival of a student to school will disrupt not only their education, but also that of the other students in the class.
- It is the legal responsibility of parents to ensure that their children attend the school where they are on roll.
- Some students and their parents/carers may need to be supported at times in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.

**Villiers High School expects:**

**All students will**

- Arrive at school by 8.15am, appropriately prepared for the day and morning registration.
- Attend school regularly and for the whole day.
- Inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that affects their attendance at school.

**All our students' parents/carers will:**

- Ensure that their child attends school every day unless they are too ill to attend or if there is an acceptable reason for absence.
- Ensure their child arrives on time, fully prepared and equipped for the school day.
- Inform the Attendance Officer by 8.00am on the first morning of absence and each consecutive day of absence that follows. Direct Line: 020 8867 9077
- Communicate with the school about their child's progress and attend meetings such as Parents' evenings.
- Ensure that their contact details are correct and inform the school of any changes.
- Where possible, parents/carers will endeavour to arrange appointments outside school hours to avoid disruption to the child's attendance. If this is unavoidable, parents/carers are asked to ensure that their child attends school before/after the appointment.
- On the child's return to school, send a note explaining the reason for the absence.

**Villiers High School will:**

- Provide students with appropriate education.
- Respond to concerns raised by both students and parent/carers in a prompt, fair and proper manner
- Follow the procedures of the school and the Local Authority's Attendance Service in dealing with attendance issues.

**Attendance Target:**

- In accordance with the Department for Education's guidelines, Villiers High School aims to achieve at least 95% attendance across the cohort.

## **Procedures**

### **Monitoring**

Attendance performance will be monitored throughout the school in a number of ways:

- Registration in every lesson
- Weekly review of attendance by the Attendance Officer to Heads of Year
- Weekly reporting of attendance by form to form tutors by Heads of Year
- Regular reporting of attendance figures to the Governing body
- Regular reporting of attendance to SLT
- The Form Tutor to have regular conversations with their tutees challenging absence. They will take ownership for monitoring any student in their form with 95-92% attendance
- The Head of Year and Attendance officer to have regular conversations with students, parents and carers challenging their absence. They will take ownership monitoring any student in their year cohort with attendance 92% and below
- Termly reporting of Attendance and information to parents in a newsletter created by Attendance officer

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governors and the Senior Leadership team and will be amended as appropriate.

### **Registration**

The register provides the daily record of attendance of all students. It contributes to a student's end of term reports, record of achievement and references. It is a legal document that may be required in a court of law as evidence, for example in prosecutions for non-attendance.

Villiers High School uses Lesson Monitor electronic registration system. The main codes are those laid down by the DFE from September 2006, details of these codes are found in Appendix 1.

The school day begins at 8.20am for students. Registration takes place in AM registration. When a student arrives after the start of registration he/she will be marked as late. Students arriving after 10.59am will be coded as U by the attendance officer, which constitutes legally as an unauthorised absence. It is essential therefore that parents/carers inform the school if a student will be late, for example, they are attending an urgent appointment e.g. with a dentist or doctor, so the absence can be authorised.

PM Registration is every afternoon between 3.00pm and 3.10pm.

Registers are also taken in every lesson using SIMs. Lesson registration enables patterns of internal truancy to be identified and responded to quickly. This helps VHS to identify where there may be an issue with a particular subject, or another reason. Students will be spoken to initially, and parents will be informed where appropriate.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the pupil's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the school to be unacceptable. Absence should not be authorised in the following circumstances:

- No explanation offered by the parent/carer or the explanation offered is unsatisfactory (e.g. shopping, house sitting etc.)
- Family holidays (which are taken without the school's prior consent or knowledge and/or are in excess of any time agreed by the school).
- 'Special' occasions (when the school does not agree that leave should be given). It is important to note that only the school can authorise absence. The school will take into account the information provided by parents/carers, but

where explanations are not felt to be acceptable, the absence will remain unauthorised and the parents/carers will be informed.

### **Missing Pupils**

If the students are absent without the knowledge of their parents/carers' knowledge this is a cause for concern as they may be putting themselves at risk. Communication between home and school is vital and this is why we ask that parents contact the school by 8am on the day of absence and every consequent day.

Where parents/ carers have not made contact with the school and the child remains absent without explanation, the attendance officer contact the parents by telephone and where that fails, they will follow up in writing. Parents must therefore ensure that their contact details are up-to-date and inform the school if they change.

If a student is missing from school for a length of time exceeding 5 school days and parents/carers cannot be contacted, the school may try to arrange a home visit to continue the process of 'Reasonable Enquiry' to establish whether the family has moved. If they have moved they will be referred to the Children Missing Education Officer, who works as part of the Ealing Schools' Attendance Service. Where the student is identified as being a non-attender or 'school refuser', they will be dealt with in the first instance, by the school's attendance officer who will try to work with the family to remove the barriers to attendance. Should the situation remain unresolved the Ealing Schools' Attendance Service will be contacted.

### **Strategies to support improved attendance**

#### **Incentives:**

Villiers High School will reward good attendance as well as penalise poor attendance. We aim to do this by conducting weekly attendance analysis and responding to the data:

##### Weekly

- The form with the best attendance receives achievement points.

##### Termly

- 100% attendees will be entered into prize draw termly. (e.g. prize of £10 shopping voucher/ per student/ per year group). The 100% target will be reset every term, so that students who are improving also have a chance to win.
- The form with the most attendance termly will be awarded with achievement points in celebration assembly.
- 100% Attendees will receive postcards/letters home in the register box half termly, and the students will also be celebrated termly.

#### **Support in school:**

The school aims to work in partnership with parents/carers to resolve issues. Parents/carers must contact the school if they are experiencing problems with their child's attendance. The contact should be with the Attendance Officer, Form tutor, Head of Year and Pastoral Assistant. All of the contact details for the people named are available on the school website or alternatively parents/carers can phone or visit the school to make an appointment

#### **Links to other policies:**

In all cases where attendance is a problem, consideration will be given to whether any aspect of one of our other policies should be implemented, for example the SEN policy, where a student has an unidentified Special Educational Need that adds to their reluctance to attend.

### **Re-integration:**

Returning to school following a period of absence can prove challenging for some young people, regardless of their reason for absence. In these situations Villiers High School will work with parents, members of staff and any relevant external agencies to plan how best to support the pupil's return to school.

One of the strategies we may use is to start the reintegration gradually, building up to having a full timetable. Other support may also be considered depending on the needs of the student and the resources available to the school.

Students who miss school may be given pastoral support to help catch up on missed work at lunch times and after school. In these cases, regular meetings and contacts with key stakeholders will monitor this progress to see if further support is required.

### **Punctuality:**

If a student arrives at school after 8.20am they will be marked late and their Form Tutor should keep them back for a short detention after school.

If a student arrives at school after 8.40am they will be required to sign in with the Attendance Officer. Their school planner will be stamped on the relevant day's page. If they have a legitimate reason, such as a medical/dental appointment, the register will be annotated accordingly and no detention will be given.

If a student is persistently late in a week they will receive a detention with the Head of Year. The Head of Year may liaise with the attendance officer and further support and guidance may be given.

Should students persist in being late throughout the term, there is an escalation of sanctions available for members of staff to use and we will decide the most appropriate sanctions depending on the circumstances surrounding the absent.

### **Poor attendance due to medical issues:**

Where students are persistently absent due to an undiagnosed/unconfirmed medical condition, the school may ask for proof of medical appointments. This may take the form of an appointment card, prescription medication container/box.

If there is a known condition, Villiers High School will work with parents to ensure the wellbeing of their child during their time at Villiers. Villiers High School will also plan with parents to ensure minimal disruption their child's attendance.

### **Process of dealing with attendance problems:**

Student's attendance falls below 95%: Discussion with student and Form tutor about how this can improve, setting targets- Form tutor calls home to discuss key issues and make parents aware of the situation

Student's attendance falls to 93%: 'Attendance tips and letter 1 is sent home (Appendix 3). Pupil may be put on Form Tutor report and parents' notified. If the situation does not improve, the school may organise a meeting with parents/carers, pupil and Attendance officer/Head of Year and Letter 2 is given (Appendix 4) There may also be home visits from the attendance officer and School's safety officer.

Student's attendance falls to 90%: The student is referred to the borough council as being a 'persistent absentee' Letter 3 (Appendix 5) informing parents of the persistent absence and the possibility of a fine and prosecution from the borough.

Persistent absence (or PA) is absence of 10% or more. An individual pupil is deemed to be a persistent absentee, therefore if his/her attendance is less than 90% (regardless of whether or not the absences have been authorised). Persistent absence can be the accumulation of occasional days of absence, or continual absence where pupils have a single, extended period of time off school. Letters sent to parents/carers reflect this.

### **Referral criteria for intervention from the Borough of Ealing's Schools Attendance Service**

- Students whose attendance falls below 90% will be monitored by the school's Attendance Officer working with the Head of Year. Students will be seen in school and parents/carers will be invited into school to discuss their child's attendance.
- Students whose attendance falls below 90% and where much of the absence is due to unauthorised circumstances such as truancy will be referred for action by the Borough of Ealing's Schools Attendance Service according to the process outlined above.
- Missing students will be referred to the Borough of Ealing's Children Missing Education Officer once school staff have tried and failed to contact parents/carers.

### **Requests for leave of absence during term time**

- Villiers High School is increasingly concerned with the number of holidays/ leaves of absence parents are asking to take for their children during term time. This is impacting our attendance as a school and also has a serious impact on the attendance and achievement of the affected student.
- The Department For Education have made it clear that unless there are exceptional circumstances, all requests for leave or holidays during term time should be refused. Villiers High School will act in accordance with the above directive in all cases.
- There will be a reminder letter (Appendix 6) in the newsletter and displayed on the welcome screens close to holidays for all around the time of the holidays.
- Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances will be granted at the discretion of the Headteacher. Please note that proof will be required for the leave to be granted.
- Should parents still wish to apply for a leave of absence, they must submit the Leave of Absence request form a minimum of 4 weeks before the requested absence is due to start. Should unforeseen circumstances prevent this the Headteacher will use his discretion as to whether an application will be accepted.
- Absences over the agreed number of days will count as unauthorised, unless the school accepts that there are exceptional circumstances.
- Once the absence extends over 20 days, the school reserves the right to remove the student from roll and offer their place. The student will need to re-apply to Ealing Borough for their position. Parents must be aware that their place may have already been filled and they may have to apply to a different school.

## Appendices

Appendix 1: DFE Attendance codes, descriptions and meanings.

Appendix 2: Application for leave during term

Appendix 3: Persistent absence Letter 1

Appendix 4: Persistent absence Letter 2

Appendix 5: Persistent absence Letter 3

Appendix 6: Continuous Absence Letter 1

Appendix 7: Continuous Absence Letter 2

Appendix 8: Continuous Absence Letter 3

Appendix 9: Home Visit Form.

Appendix 1: DFE Attendance codes, descriptions and meanings. Code Description Meaning

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual Registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (Not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual Registration (i.e. a pupil attending other establishment)	Approved education activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Authorised absence
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller Absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Authorised absence
X	Non- compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils.	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix 2: Application for leave during term

**Villiers High School**

**APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

As a Parent/ Carer with whom the child lives you should complete this form if you are requesting leave of absence during term time. There is no entitlement to leave in term time and Parents/Carers should not expect leave of absence to be granted as of right. Leave is allowable only in exceptional circumstances leave is no longer allowable for purposes of a holiday. It is also possible in certain circumstances that your child could be removed from the school roll and you would need to reapply for a place on your return.

Please return the completed form to the Headteacher no less than 4 weeks before the date when you want the period of absence to start, stating your reasons for needing to take your child out of school during term time

**We are asked to warn you that If you take your child out of school without authorisation from the school the Local Education Authority has the power to issue Fixed-Penalty Notices of £60, rising to £120 if not paid within 21 days (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2004).**

Name and form of child:
Address:
Parent / Carer(s) Name(s):
Telephone:
Destination:
Reason for applying for leave of absence:
Proposed date of departure:
Proposed date of return.
Total number of absence days applied for:
Signature of Parents/ Carer:
Date
Your request for leave of absence for your child for ..... days is approved / not approved.
Your child will be expected to return on Failure to do so will result in any extra time being classified as Unauthorised absence.
Signed ..... Headteacher Date .....

### Appendix 3

Persistent Absence - Letter 1

Parent/Carer of:

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am the Attendance officer for Villiers High School and in that role I closely monitor attendance of all pupils. I am concerned that your child's attendance is only %.

The Department of Education has set a target for schools to achieve 95% attendance which takes in to account an average level for illness and other justifiable reasons for absence. Attendance of under 95% can lead to a lack of academic and personal progress at school which will have an impact on your child's future.

I hope that you will work with the school and your child to ensure that attendance is improved to a satisfactory level. If attendance does not improve then you could receive a formal warning and possible fine from Ealing Local Authority.

If you would like to discuss anything with regard to your child's attendance do not hesitate to contact me on 020 8867 9077.

Yours faithfully,

Attendance Officer

#### Appendix 4

Persistent Absence - Letter 2 : If parent does not attend meeting – if they do, a personalised letter will be produced in relation to the meeting.

Parent/Carer of:

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Following a letter I wrote to you earlier in this Academic Year with regards to concerns about your child's attendance. I note that there has been unsatisfactory progress made and your child's attendance is currently %.

You are invited to a meeting with your child and the Head of Year (or Assistant Headteacher) to discuss the reasons why your child has been absent, possible consequences for poor attendance and also what the school might be able to do to help improve this situation.

Please find with this letter a leaflet that may help you to support your child and improve their attendance.

As per my previous correspondence, if attendance does not improve then you could receive a formal warning and possible fine from Ealing Local Authority.

Please contact me on 0208 8867 9077 if you wish to discuss your child's attendance.

Yours faithfully,

Attendance Officer

## Appendix 5

### Persistent Absence - Letter 3

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to invite you for a formal meeting regarding your child's attendance which currently stands at %

Unfortunately insufficient progress has been made in improving \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance and we would like to discuss reasons for your child's absence and any ways in which the school can support you to improve this before we pass your case on to the Local Authority. Once this happens it is possible that they will take legal action against you.

Your appointment is on dd/mm/yy with (HoY) or Assistant Headteacher. It is vital that you attend this appointment and you must tell us if you cannot make the above time so we can reschedule.

Yours faithfully,

Head of Year

Appendix 6

Continuous Absence – Letter 1

The occupier «address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

If the occupier is not the parent please contact the school

Re «forename»«surname» dob «date\_of\_birth»

As you know the school expects parents to contact us on the first day of a child's absence. «Forename» has been absent since «continuously\_absent\_since» and we have not received any communication from you.

We have tried to contact you by phone but without success.

Please call the school office immediately with regard to «forename»'s absence and also up date any contact details if there have been changes. Also complete and return the slip below for our records.

If we do not hear from you, we will visit your home. If «forename»'s absence is extended we will referring the matter to the councils Children Missing Education department. Your child's school place may be at risk.

Yours faithfully,

Attendance officer

-----  
«forename» «surname» «year\_reg»

«forename»'s current absence is due to

Please confirm contact details

Telephone contact numbers

Confirm address. (same as above ) if changed please state .

Postcode

NAME

Please return to the attendance office at school

## Appendix 7

Continuous Absence - Letter 2

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename»«surname» dob «date\_of\_birth»

School Attendance. Continuing concern

I wrote previously with concerns about «forename»'s attendance . Overall attendance remains at «percentage\_attendance»%,

I can offer you an appointment on dd/mm/yy at TIME to discuss the matter, We will discuss reasons for absence,, the possible consequences for continuing poor attendance and what needs to be done to improve attendance.

You are aware that as illness is a frequent claim for «forename»'s absence evidenced other than your word is now required to consider authorisation.

A member of the teaching staff will be present and notes will be taken

The matter may be discussed with to the local authority's school attendance court officer who may be in touch with you separately.

If the date offered is not suitable, please contact me with other times so that we can arrange a more convenient time.

Yours faithfully,

Attendance Officer

## Appendix 8

Continuous Absence - Letter 3

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename»«surname» dob «date\_of\_birth»

Registered Pupil at School

School Attendance. Continuing concern

I wrote previously with concerns about «forename»'s poor attendance. Overall attendance remains at «percentage\_attendance»% Unauthorised absence«percentage\_attendance»%

I offered you an appointment on dd/mm/yy to discuss the matter, but you decided not to attend.

I would like to offer you another appointment for dd/yy/mm. We will discuss reasons for absence, the possible consequences for continuing poor attendance and what you need to be do to improve attendance.

As illness is a frequent claim for «forename»'s absence evidenced other than your word is now required to consider authorisation.

A member of the teaching staff will be present and notes will be taken

The matter will also be discussed with to the local authority's school attendance court officer who may be in touch with you separately.

If the date offered is not suitable, please contact me with other times so that we can arrange a more convenient time.

Yours faithfully,

**HOME VISIT FORM****SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LEAD:** Mr. Matthew Benson**PERSONS ATTENDING THE HOME VISIT:**

PUPIL DETAILS		<i>Please attach school attendance certificate</i> <input type="checkbox"/>		Last date of Attendance
NAME:		DOB:		
LING DETAILS				
SIBLING NAME:		DOB:		
NAME OF SCHOOL: (if different)				More siblings? Continue in additional notes.
PARENT CONTACT DETAILS				
ADDRESS				
FATHER NAME				
MOTHER NAME				
MOBILE NUMBERS				
LANDLINE TELEPHONE				
EMAIL				
ADDITIONAL and /or EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS				
FAMILY/FRIEND NAME				
CONTACT DETAILS				
ENQUIRIES MADE BY SCHOOL				
PHONE CALL 1	Date:	Tel:	Outcome:	
PHONE CALL 2	Date:	Tel:	Outcome:	
PHONE CALL 3	Date:	Tel:	Outcome:	
LETTER 1 SENT	Date:			
LETTER 2 SENT	Date:			
LETTER 3 SENT	Date:			
ENQUIRIES MADE BY ATTENDANCE OFFICER				
NAME OF ATTENDANCE OFFICER				
Home Visit	Date:			
Anyone Home?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Card Left <input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>Accommodation appears uninhabited</b>	<b>Bins Empty</b> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Post Piled Up</b> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Estate Agent Sign Outside</b> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> If Y Name/Tel of Estate Agent:
<b>Information from Neighbors</b>	<b>House No. Details:</b>		

<b>OTHER INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Was absence following a holiday?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Authorised <input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorised
<b>Any previous long absences or holiday?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Authorised <input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorised
<b>Known to Childrens Social Care?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <b>Name of Social Worker:</b> ..... <b>Social Worker Tel:</b> .....
<b>Any welfare/vulnerability concerns? E.g. domestic violence, SEN, temporary accommodation, mobility.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <b>Give details:</b> ..... .....
<b>Travelers?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <b>Previous known destinations:</b> ..... .....
<b>Asylum Seeker?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Friends/Facebook?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <b>Indicated destination</b> ..... .....
<b>Pupil Email Address</b>	
<b>Previous School Attended</b>	
<b>Any recent breakdown in relationships known e.g. in school between pupils, or between pupil or parent and school? E.g. over different opinions relating to behaviour, exclusions or sen</b>	
<b>Ethnicity</b>	

<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>

<b>SCHOOL SIGNATURE</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b> / /
<b>Role:</b>	
<b>SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SERVICE WORKER SIGNATURE</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b> / /
<b>PARENT /GUARDIAN SIGNATURE</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b> / /

